

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
Minutes for June 18, 2003
Third Wednesday of the Month

Members present: Art Albrecht, Richard Baugh, Joe Fitzgerald, Jim Huffman, Rudy Propst, Deb Stevens, Dorn Peterson, and Robert Steere.

Members absent: Shelley Baker, Les Bolt, Greg Coffman, Kathy Sarver, Carl Wassum and David Wiens. Reg Foucar-Szocki resigned.

Staff / consultants present: Phoebe Kilby, Sympoetica, Stacy Turner, Director of Planning and Community Development; and Keith Markel, Planner.

Chairman Huffman called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Ms. Kilby welcomed everyone and gave a brief summary of what has taken place so far in the development of the goals and objectives. At last month's meeting the committee decided upon goals for the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to agree upon objectives for each of those goals.

Dr. Peterson said that after looking over the goals he felt that all were appropriate. His fear is that the committee is going to over look some goals because they don't know just what needs to be included.

Ms. Kilby commented that this is a starting point. If down the road, after discussions regarding other elements of the Comprehensive Plan it seems that other objectives are needed, they can be added at that time.

She then began going through the lists of objectives under each goal.

Under goal one, objective 1.2, there was discussion as to the wording of converting single-family homes to duplexes and apartments. It was agreed that the wording "where the majority of houses have not been converted" be stricken. The word "residential" was added just before the word neighborhoods.

Objective 1.4 generated some discussion over how the 45 percent value was reached. Ms. Kilby explained that to get to that percentage of single family homes in the City there would need to be a reduction in the amount of R-3 and R-2 lands. To obtain the 45 percent, half of the current R-3 land would need to be converted to R-1.

Dr. Peterson said that Harrisonburg would always have percentages that are skewed because of the large college population that lives off campus. If students are removed from the equations Harrisonburg may not look as different as other localities when it comes to the number of single-family homes.

Ms. Kilby suggested leaving this objective in place and revisiting it after the committee reviews the land use maps.

This discussion also brought about the topic of affordable housing and the new legislation that requires localities to specify areas for affordable housing in their Comprehensive Plan.

After concerns that goal two may be placing the City in the position of promising too much, it was agreed that goal two should be amended to state "To meet the current and future needs of residents for affordable housing."

It was then discussed that objective 1.4 might conflict with goal 2. If more land is converted to single-family development, there could be limitations as to how much affordable housing could be created in the City.

The next objective that was discussed was 4.2 and related to neighborhood schools. Mrs. Turner asked how the committee envisioned that objective being realized. There was some discussion as to what a neighborhood school is and the challenges of creating that many elementary schools. It was decided to modify the objective to state, “To work with the School Board to encourage neighborhood elementary schools in underserved areas of the City.”

Dr. Peterson said the details of this objective would be worked out in the strategy phase.

Under goal six it was decided that objective 6.3 was better suited for a strategy under objective 6.4.

Under objective 9.5 the words “and support facilities” were added to the end of the sentence.

Mr. Huffman offered four new objectives for goal twelve that were accepted by the committee. They are as follows.

12.4- To encourage mixed-use development where different types of properties enhance and complement one another.

12.5- To ensure that new development of residential, commercial and industrial properties will be compatible with surrounding properties.

12.6- To rezone properties into conformity with the new Comprehensive Plan, in order to reduce incompatibility.

12.7- To encourage and promote aesthetically pleasing high-end residential communities.

The final adjustment to the goals and objectives was to change the words “establish a” in objective 15.5 to “publicize the” to better reflect what is already being done.

The next meeting of the CPAC will be on July 16, 2003. Blank City maps will be sent to all of the CPAC members so they can begin thinking of land use issues before the next meeting. A list of items to consider will be included.

There will be no CPAC meeting in August.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.